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ABSTRACT

The economic realities which have caused both parents to become full-time employees require modifications in both child care arrangements and parental responsibilities. To investigate parenting satisfaction and parental role responsibilities among employed parents, 166 Austin, Texas adults (98 female, 68 male) from dual earner families were interviewed in a door-to-door survey of preselected census tracts (to insure an ethnically representative sample). The survey collected data on parenting satisfaction, preferred parenting responsibility, preferred community-based resources, and demographic information. An analysis of the results showed that parents were moderately satisfied with themselves as parents but not particularly satisifed with the care offered by community-based resources. Child-rearing was viewed as the purview of parents, with most of the responsibility apportioned to parents themselves, with the exceptions of teaching cognitive skills and physical health. Both spouses held conventional views about parenting but more egalitarian views about the allocation of role responsibilities within the family unit. Females reported higher parenting satisfaction and lower spouse satisfaction than males, and higher preferred parenting responsibility and lower preferred spouse responsibility. Work orientation and ethnicity were not differentiating variables. (BL)

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PREFERRED PARENTING: COMPARISONS OF WORKING WOMEN AND MEN

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Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Psychological Association, Anaheim, CA, August 26-30, 1983.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the parenting satisfaction and perceptions of parental role responsibility among dual-earner families. Of particular interest to the research were the perceptions of parents in dual-earner families regarding the extent to which various child-rearing functions are viewed as the responsibility of the parents and the extent to which they are viewed as the responsibility of various societal institutions and community agencies. Participants were 166 individuals who were members of dual-earner families, were employed full-time, and had children living in the home. Door to door surveying of preselected census tracts was used for gathering data from an ethnically representative group. The survey form was modeled after a comprehensive parenting scale developed by Gilbert and Hanson (1983).

The analyses focused on three main aspects of the parenting experience: (a) parenting satisfaction, (b) preferred apportionment of child-rearing responsibilities, and (c) community-based resources preferred for sharing child-rearing responsibilities. Comparisons were made by gender of respondent, ethnicity (Black, White, Mexican-American), and work-orientation (job vs. career). The results indicate that parents are moderately satisfied with themselves as parents but not particularly satisified with the care offered by community-based resources. ALso, child-rearing was viewed as the purview of parents with most of the responsibility in the 30 child-rearing areas assessed apportioned to the parents themselves. Gender was a differentiating variable throughout the analyses, and ethnicity was not. The implications of these findings for dual-earner families are discussed.

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Anaheim, California, August 1983

Preferred Parenting: Comparisons of Working Women and Men

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The questions about parenting addressed in this research required responses from a diverse group of families in various communities within the city of Austin. The methodology used is unique among other studies of its kind because of the large sample of parents from the community who participated. The study investigated the parenting satisfaction and perceptions of parental role responsibilities among dual-worker families. Of particular interest to the research were the perceptions of parents in dual-worker families regarding the extent to which various child-rearing functions are viewed as the responsibility of the male and/or female parent and the extent to which they are viewed as the responsibility of various societal institutions and community agencies.

The reality of changes in the current world of work is by necessity related to possible changes in the world of the family. The vast majority of married women and men who are parents also are employed full-time. This situation, which appears to be a normative pattern, requires modifications in both child care arrangements and the apportionment of responsibility for various parenting activities. Although the former is viewed as an inevitable consequence of the emerging dual-working family lifestyle, the latter is not. That is, many working parents feel that they should be performing the same parenting functions as parents who are not employed full-time although their actual day-to-day lifestyle is incompatible with doing so. The stress and conflict experienced by dual-worker families, particularly by the female

spouses, is well documented (e.g., Elman & Gilbert, in press; Roland & Harris, 1979). A second source of stress, in addition to internalized beliefs and values about parental responsibilities, is insufficient community-based resources with which parents can share certain parenting functions (Provence, Naylor, & Patterson, 1977; Richardson & Kagan, 1979).

The questions posed in this study focus on several aspects of the parenting experience: (a) present parenting satisfaction regarding specific areas of parenting* responsibility; (b) preferred apportionment of parenting responsibilities in these same areas of parenting responsibility; and (c) community-based resources preferred for the particular areas of parenting responsibility focused upon in the study. Data were gathered from parents in families in which both spouses were employed outside the home full-time (dual-worker families). Comparisons were then made of male and female spouses and of individuals of Black, Chicano, and White ethnic backgrounds.

Method

Participants and Procedure

The research began with the development of a Survey Form. In-depth structured interviews were first conducted with 22 dual-worker families selected at random. The purposes of this initial phase of the research were to augment the construct validity of the parenting domains to be used in the main study among individuals in low and middle income neighborhoods and to identify salient community-based resources to include on the survey which was to be developed on the basis of these interviews. A survey form was then developed and further pilot tested.

The main phase of the data collection was then conducted with families in which spouses were married and children were currently living in the home. Door-

*Throughout the paper the term parenting responsibility refers to child-rearing activities normally associated with the parental role.

to-door surveying was done in preselected census tracts within the city limits of Austin, Texas. The tracts were selected to optimize the likelihood of sampling Black, Chicano, and White families of comparable levels of income. Blocks within tracts were selected at random within two constraints -- (1) the block appeared safe to the research assistants, and (2) there was some evidence of families with children living on the block (e.g., bicycles were visible, people who happened to be out of doors reported that families on the block had children living in the home). The assistants, who typically worked in pairs when delivering the surveys, knocked on the doors of homes, explained the purposes of the study and the criteria for participation, and, if the person was interested, left two copies of the survey -- one for each spouse. (Responses were anonymous.) Spouses were asked to fill out the survey forms without consulting each other. The research assistants returned the next day and/or at some prearranged time to pick up the completed surveys.

For the sample of dual-worker families, approximately 14% of the homes visited (where someone was at home at the time of the visit) met the criteria for the study. Of these, 83% agreed to participate, and 61% actually completed and returned the surveys.

The Survey Form

The survey tapped four basic areas: (1) parenting satisfaction, (2) preferred parenting responsibility*, (3) preferred community-based resources, and (4) demographic information. The 30 parenting items used in the areas of parenting satisfaction, preferred parenting responsibility, and preferred community-based resources were taken from the Perceptions of Parental Roles Scales (PPRS) developed by Gilbert and Hanson (1983). This 78-item measure assesses 13 parental areas in three major domains: (a) teaching the child, (b) meeting the child's basic needs, and (c) serving in the interface role between the child

*Child-rearing activities normally associated with the parental role

and the family and other social institutions. Because of the necessity of keeping the survey short, a subset of 30 items was selected from the 78-item scales. The 30 items selected were those which correlated most highly with their respective subscales of the PPRS and which provided minimum overlap in content with other items. On the basis of the pilot interviews, items from two subscales in the area of basic needs--health care and food, clothing, and shelter--were not included in the survey. Respondents invariably viewed these areas as the responsibility of parents. These areas are for the domain of teaching: (1) cognitive development, (2) social skills, (3) handling of emotions, (4) physical health, (5) norms and social values, (6) personal hygiene, and (7) survival skills; for the domain of basic needs: (8) child's emotional needs and (9) child care; and for the interface roles: (10) interface between child and social institutions and (11) interface between child and family. The instructions given to participants for each aspect of the survey are as follows.

Parenting satisfaction. Participants were asked to rate "your satisfaction with how well you, your spouse, and others (for example, the school or church) typically carry out these parenting activities." Satisfaction was rated on a five-point scale with a rating of 1 indicating low satisfaction, 3 average satisfaction, and 5 high satisfaction. (Respondents were asked to indicate if no "others" were involved in carrying out a particular parenting activity, or if an item was not appropriate to the age of their child.)

Preferred parenting responsibility. Respondents were asked to indicate "what percentage of the responsibility for carrying out each parenting activity YOU WOULD PREFER to be taken by (1) yourself, (2) your spouse, and (3) others." They were further instructed to respond to all the items even if they did not currently apply to their child, and were reminded that the total responsibility for any one item should add up to 100%.

Preferred community-based resources. For each parenting item where respondents indicated some percentage of preferred responsibility, they were also asked to check what they meant by "others." The categories provided on the survey form were your other children, relatives, paid childcare person in your or their home, public-private school, day care center, community center, church, other (please specify). More than one category could be checked for a particular parenting item.

Demographic information. The usual data were gathered with regard to sex, ethnicity, age and number of children, total family income, marital status, number of years married, level of education, and employment status of self and of spouse. Information regarding work attitudes and orientation was also obtained. Respondents used a five-point scale ranging from low (1) to high (5) to indicate their (a) level of work commitment and (b) level of work aspirations. In addition, they were asked to indicate the average number of hours devoted to their work each week, whether or not they worked in their home, and whether they "consider your present position to be a job or a career?" Finally, they were asked to indicate the type of preschool-aged (preschool) and school-aged childcare (afterschool) arrangements typically made as well as the number of hours of child care typically used per week for preschool childcare and/or afterschool childcare. The categories provided for preschool care were: child's mother, child's father, child's sisters or brothers, other relatives, friends in the neighborhood, paid person in your home, paid person in their home, preschool program, daycare center, and other (please specify). The categories for afterschool care were identical except for the additional categories of mother watches child at work, father watches child at work, and child watches self. Respondents could indicate more than one type of childcare.

Results

Characteristics of the Dual-Worker Families

What describes the participants? A total of 166 individuals completed the survey form, 51 women and 51 men in couples and 47 women and 17 men whose spouses did not complete the surveys. Of these individuals, 26.5% identified themselves as Black, 23.5% as Chicano, and 48.8% as White; 59.0% were female and 41.0% were male. For all three ethnic groups, more women completed the survey form than men. The ethnic breakdown for families in which both spouses responded to the survey is similar to that for the entire sample. Within this subsample of 102 individuals, 18.6% were Black, 27.5% were Chicano, and 52% were White.

Overall, the sample participants were 34 years old and had been married on the average of 6-10 years to their present spouse. The number of children the participants had differed by ethnicity; White families on the average had less than two children whereas Chicano and Black families had an average of three children (31% of the Chicano parents and 26% of the Black parents reported having more than three children). The sample participants also differed with respect to educational level. The White and Black participants had approximately the same level of education with nearly all the participants having completed high school and over 60% having some college education. The Chicano parents, in contrast, had a significantly lower educational level with 24% not having completed high school and only 42% having completed some college work.

Interestingly, the participants did not differ by ethnicity with respect to the total family income, work aspirations, or the desire to work. The total family income was reported in seven interval

categories. The largest percentage of the sample respondents fell in the category of $15,000 to $24,999 for all three ethnic groups. In response to the question "How high are your aspirations in regard to your work?", participants rated themselves an average of 3.4, on a scale which ranged from one (not at all high) to 5 (very high). Similarly, when asked "Would you continue to work if there was no financial necessity", their mean response was 3.5--an average to good chance they would continue. (This scale ranged from one, definitely would not, to 5, definitely would continue.) Nearly all the respondents worked outside the home and they worked an average of 42.5 hours per week. Approximately half of the respondents considered their present work to be a job and half considered it to be a career.

Finally, the sample participants did not differ by ethnicity with respect to the number of hours of non-parental care for preschool children (preschool care) or for school-age children (after school care). On the average, these participants used 32.0 hours of preschool care and 12.8 hours of after school care per week. Preschool care was used by 56 families and after school care by 87 families. Most parents of preschool children used over 31 hours/week; approximately half of the parents of school-aged children used 11 or more hours/week. Nearly 70% of the children in these families were less than 14 years of age.

Parenting Satisfaction--Do Men & Women Differ?

The participants in this study were asked to rate their satisfaction with how well each of the thirty parenting activities typically were done by themselves ("Self"), their spouses ("Spouse"), and other individuals or organizations ("Other"). The ratings were made on a five-point scale with a one indicating a low level of satisfaction and a five indicating a high level of satisfaction. The thirty items were subdivided into the eleven scales described earlier. A scale score was calculated by summing the responses from the items in each subscale and dividing by the total number of items to yield an average item score which could range from 1.0 to 5.0.

Self-satisfaction. The women and men in the sample were generally rather well satisfied with how well they performed these parenting activities. As can be seen from Table 1 the scales' item means were all above the scale midpoint of three, and in most cases were greater than four. Differences in the self-satisfaction ratings of women and men were found on four of the 11 parenting scales. Men reported a higher satisfaction rating on the scale dealing with the teaching of physical health than did women. Women, on the other hand, expressed a greater level of satisfaction in teaching the child how to handle their emotions, in meeting the child's emotional needs, and in providing child care. For both men and women, the highest levels of self-satisfaction were in the areas of meeting the child's emotional needs, teaching norms and values, and helping the child recognize the importance of family life (all these scales' means were above 4.0 on a five-point scale). The lowest levels of satisfaction for both men and women were in the areas of teaching the child survival skills, physical health, and cognitive development skills, and helping the child develop a sense of civic responsibility (all these scales' means were between 3.1 and 3.7).

Spouse satisfaction. When asked to rate how satisfied they were with how well their spouse performed these parenting activities, men and women expressed different levels of satisfaction on six of the eleven scales. In every case, the men reported a higher level of satisfaction with how well their spouses performed the parenting activities than did the women. Differences between women and men were found in the areas dealing with teaching the child cognitive development skills, personal hygiene, and how to handle emotions; providing daily childcare; meeting the child's emotional needs; and helping the child recognize the importance of family life. However, and as was true for self-satisfaction, both men and women were quite satisfied with their spouses' performance as a parent. That is, all of the mean scale scores were above 3.0 (average) on the 5-point rating scale. The men, in particular, were highly satisfied; they rated their satisfaction with their spouses' parenting performance at 4.0 or higher on seven of the eleven scales. In contrast, women rated their satisfaction with their husbands' parenting performance at 4.0 or higher on only three of these scales. Finally, the same areas of highest and lowest satisfaction occurred in regard to spouse performance as reported earlier for self-performance.

An indication of the degree of congruence between self-perceptions and the perceptions of one's spouse is provided by comparing women's mean ratings of Self with men's mean ratings of Spouse, and men's mean ratings of Self with women's mean ratings of Spouse. (A summary of these means appears in Table 1.) Without exception these various pairs of mean ratings are very similar in magnitude. For example, for teaching the handling of emotions, the female's mean self-satisfaction rating is 4.2 and the male's mean spouse satisfaction rating is 4.0; similarly, the male's mean self-satisfaction rating is 3.7, and the female's mean spouse satisfaction rating is 3.6.

Satisfaction with others. In rating how satisfied they were with how other individuals or organizations performed the parenting activities, women and men's ratings differenced on only one of the eleven scales, meeting the child's emotional needs. Women reported higher satisfaction than did men. In general, however, these parents expressed lower levels of satisfaction with how others performed the parenting activities than with how either their spouses or they themselves performed them. (None of the mean ratings were greater than 3.6 with most of them being near to or less than 3.0). For women, five of the eleven subscales were rated below average, and for men, four were below average. Interestingly, the only two areas receiving comparable Other, Self, and Spouse satisfaction ratings were teaching the child cognitive development skills and physical health. It should also be noted that these two parenting areas received the highest satisfaction ratings for Others.

Are There Ethnic Differences?

We were also interested in whether there were differences in how White, Black, and Chicano parents rated their satisfaction with these parenting activities. In general, there were relatively few differences.

Preferred Parenting Responsibility--Do Men and Women Differ?

In this part of the study, participants were asked to indicate the percentage of responsibility they would prefer to have taken by: (a) themselves, (b) their spouses, and (c) others for the thirty parenting activities. As for satisfaction, the mean percentage responsibility for each scale was calculated based on the number of items in each scale.

Self-responsibility. Men and women saw themselves preferring to assume different percentages of responsibility in five of the eleven parenting areas. In four of these areas, women preferred taking a greater percentage of the parenting responsibility than did the men. Women preferred to take greater responsibility in teaching the handling of emotions and personal hygiene, in meeting the child's emotional needs, and in providing daily child care. The largest percentage difference between men and women occurred for providing daily child care: women preferred 47% of the responsibility and men only 32%. Men preferred to assume the larger percentage of the responsibility for teaching children physical health. As can be seen from Table 2, the portion of preferred self-responsibility indicated ranged from 31% to 49% for women and from 32% to 43% for men.

Spouse responsibility. When indicating the percentage of responsibility they preferred their spouses to take, men and women differed quite dramatically. Mean differences were found for eight of the eleven scales (see Table 2). In every case, men expressed a preference for their wives to take a greater percentage of the responsibility for parenting than women expected from their husbands. The greatest differences occurred in the areas of providing daily child care with females preferring their spouses to take responsibility for 32% and males preferring 53% from their spouses. Similar patterns are evident for teaching personal hygiene and meeting the child's emotional needs. More equitable perceptions occurred in regard to teaching physical health and survival skills, and helping the child develop a sense of civic responsibility. The portion of preferred spouse responsibility indicated ranged from 25% to 40% for females and from 31% to 53% for males.

Responsibility assigned to others. When the participants were asked what percentage of the parenting responsibility should be assumed by other individuals or organizations, men and women were in close agreement. No gender differences

occurred on any of the eleven scales although the percentages for females were consistently higher than those for males. In general, the parents in this sample preferred that other individuals or organizations take relatively small percentage of the responsibility (10 to 20%) of parenting in comparison to themselves or their spouse. The two exceptions were teaching cognitive skills and physical health where 30 to 40% was preferred.

Are There Ethnic Differences?

For the most part, White, Black and Chicano parents indicated similar percentages of preferred responsibility for the areas represented by the eleven parenting scales.

What Predicts Parenting Satisfaction in Dual-Worker Families?

This study concerned both parenting satisfaction and preferred parenting responsibilities. Of high interest is how one set of variables relates to the other. That is, what best predicts parenting self-satisfaction in the areas under investigation. To answer this question multiple regression analyses were performed to evaluate the contribution of specific variables to parenting self-satisfaction. In these analyses, rather than using the eleven individual scale scores, one average scale score was calculated from all 30 items for Self-Satisfaction and for Self, Spouse, and Other Responsibility.

A set of six predictor variables was entered into the regression equation, the three average responsibility scores (for Self, Spouse, and Other) and three background variables (total family income, education level, and work aspirations). Past research guided the selection of background variables to be used in the regression equation. Three sets of regression analyses were then computed, one for the total sample, one for women, and one for men.

In the analyses for the total sample the overall F reached statistical significance, $F(6,126)=4.75$, $p=.0001$. Three variables were significant contributors to predicting parenting Self-Satisfaction--Preferred Other Responsibility ($p=.001$), Preferred Self Responsibility ($p=.005$), and Preferred Spouse Responsibility ($p=.04$). None of the three background variables were significant contributors. Higher levels of preferred self-responsibility and lower levels of spouse and other responsibility were related to higher levels of parenting satisfaction.

In the analyses for males only, the overall F was again significant, $F(6,47)=3.00$, $p=.015$. The two variables making significant contributions to predicting Self-Satisfaction for men were Preferred Self Responsibility ($p=.009$) and Preferred Other Responsibility ($p=.058$). In the third analyses, for women, the overall F was, $F(6,72)=1.92$, $p=.09$. The two variables making the greatest contributions in predicting parenting Self-Satisfaction for working women were Preferred Other Responsibility ($p=.011$) and Preferred Spouse Responsibility ($p=.069$).

The results from the regression analyses underscore the relationship between parenting self-satisfaction and preferred responsibility for parenting activities. Clearly the two sets of variables are highly related for working parents, yet somewhat differently for women and men. For both groups, preferring to have Others share less of the child-rearing responsibility is related to their parenting satisfaction. For women, however, preferring their spouse to assume less responsibility was an important predictor whereas their own level of Self-Responsibility was not. The reverse was true for the men. That is, for men Self-Responsibility was a significant predictor of their Self-Satisfaction and Spouse Responsibility was not. These findings make intuitive sense when one realizes that working women typically carry the large proportion of parenting responsibility. Sharing this responsibility with their spouses by the men taking greater responsibility and the women experiencing their taking greater responsibility would thus ease the parenting situation in the home.

Discussion

Review of Major Findings

This research focused on three main aspects of the parenting experience: (a) parenting satisfaction, (b) preferred apportionment of parenting responsibilities, and (c) community-based resources preferred for sharing parenting responsibilities. In planning the study and analyzing the findings, three characteristics of the research participants were salient--gender, ethnicity, and work orientation (career vs. job). Data were collected in the community using comprehensive parenting scales recently developed by Gilbert and Hanson (1983). More detailed considerations of the results will soon be available in two manuscripts being prepared for publication.

Parenting satisfaction. In general, parents reported moderately high satisfaction with themselves as parents in the various parenting areas assessed. Thus working full-time does not appear to be associated with lower parenting satisfaction for either women or men. Satisfaction with spouses was also moderately high, although men were more satisfied with their spouses, on the whole, than were women. Finally, and perhaps of most importance given the purposes of the research neither spouse reported impressive levels of satisfaction with the parenting care offered by community-based resources.

Parenting responsibility. Parenting was viewed as the purview of the parents. With the exception of teaching the child cognitive development skills and physical health, where the public and private schools were given a large portion of the preferred responsibility, responsibility for parenting was apportioned to the parents themselves. Women tended to prefer greater responsibility than the men. However, women preferred their spouses to take more responsibility than the men wished to take.

Apparently, then, both spouses in dual-worker families continue to hold relatively conventional views about parenting but somewhat more egalitarian views about the allocation of those parental role responsibilities within the family unit. Thus, what typically had been viewed as mostly the mother's responsibility was viewed in these families as the shared responsibility of mothers and fathers. These parents have not appreciably redefined the parental role such that traditional parental role responsibilities are delegated to social supports and institutional representatives. Particularly surprising in this regard was the low portion of preferred responsibility dual-worker families assigned to others in the area of child care. Although both parents are working and report relatively high work aspirations and commitment (willingness to work if there was no financial necessity), they prefer to take 80% of the responsibility in this area. And, as was noted earlier, the largest difference between the scores of men and women occurred in this parenting area. Men preferred that their spouses assume most of the responsibility for daily child care, and women agreed.

Consistent with this interpretation is the finding that preferred responsibility apportioned to others was a significant predictor of parenting self-satisfaction for parents in dual-worker families--with greater self-satisfaction being related to lower preferred use of others.

Preferred community-based resources for parenting. The most preferred resource of dual-worker parents is the school. The public or private school was preferred in nearly every parenting area. Paid child care

facilities were low on the list of Others, being selected only 17% of the time by dual-worker parents, and less often than other relatives and the church. Parents clearly expect a great deal from the schools and very little from child care facilities--even though nearly half the child care actually used by parents for preschool children was paid child care.

Gender. Gender differences appeared throughout the analyses. Generally women reported higher parenting self-satisfaction and lower spouse satisfaction than men and higher preferred parenting self-responsibility and lower preferred spouse responsibility. In the regression analyses to predict self-satisfaction, Preferred Spouse Responsibility and Other Responsibility were important predictors for working women and Preferred Self-Responsibility and Other Responsibility important predictors for men. Also, different demographic and work-related correlates of parenting self-satisfaction and preferred self-responsibility emerged for men and women. The work-related variables were generally more strongly related for men than for women and the demographic variables of ages and educational level more related for women than for men.

Ethnicity. Generally speaking ethnicity was not a differentiating variable in the study. Parents from the three ethnic groups sampled appeared to hold very similar perceptions of preferred parenting responsibilities. Reports of parenting satisfaction were also quite similar. Chicano families preferred the use of family members for sharing parenting responsibilities more than did the White and Black families.

Work orientation. Considering one's employment to be a job or a career did not appreciably affect one's parenting satisfaction or preferred responsibilities for parenting.

Implications for Dual-Worker Families

Parents in dual-worker families, in general, preferred sharing only a small percentage of the responsibilities associated with the parental role. Because dual-worker families also reported using various paid child care arrangements for their children and low satisfaction with the Others who currently helped them in meeting parenting demands, one could argue that their preferences would be quite different (and more in line with the reality of the current dual-worker family lifestyle) if these "Others" could provide higher quality care to children. This line of argument assumes that parents want to relinquish a greater proportion of parenting responsibility and feel uncomfortable doing so given what they see available to them as options. Should this be the case, and it most likely is for some parents, more effort needs to be devoted to communicating to representatives of societal institutions and community-based resources about which areas of parenting responsibility parents would like to share and how this could be competently accomplished by them.

It is also possible that parents want to continue to view parenting as their primary responsibility. That is, regardless of the quality of the care that could be available to them, parents prefer to take on these responsibilities themselves. Since people parent far fewer children now than in previous years, for both economic and moral reasons, the emotional investment in raising one's children may be greater. Should this be the case, as it most likely is for some parents, then energy needs to be given to providing a societal structure which permits a greater interconnectness between work and family. Examples here include flexible working hours, job-sharing, bringing children to work (on-work-site day care), maternity and paternity leaves, and sick leave programs to care for one's children.

Both interpretations of the findings are probably accurate. Some parents want to redefine the parental role to include quality care from others outside the family, and some parents want to work and assume most of the responsibilities for the parental role themselves. Both styles of parenting seem possible, but both to some degree require changes in existing social policy as well as in conceptions of parenting.

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Table 1

Dual-worker Families: Comparison of Mean Satisfaction Responses of Male and Female Parents on the 11 Parenting Scales

	Self				Spouse				Others			
	Females		Males		Females		Males		Females		Males	
Scales	M[a]	(SD)	M[a]	(SD)	M[a]	(SD)	M[a]	(SD)	M[a]	(SD)	M[a]	(SD)
CD	3.67	(.88)	3.48	(.77)	3.29	(.95)	3.74	(.91)	3.60	(.76)	3.46	(.80)
HE	4.19	(.79)	3.70	(.99)	3.61	(.99)	4.03	(.83)	2.77	(.88)	2.85	(.89)
SoS	4.11	(.80)	3.95	(.90)	3.84	(.91)	4.02	(.81)	3.18	(.98)	3.23	(.91)
N&V	4.27	(.65)	4.14	(.78)	4.12	(.74)	4.25	(.74)	3.18	(1.03)	3.14	(.73)
PhH	3.30	(1.12)	3.73	(1.20)	3.62	(1.16)	3.32	(1.19)	3.67	(.97)	3.92	(.87)
PeH	4.15	(.84)	3.90	(.98)	3.76	(.93)	4.29	(.95)	2.95	(1.03)	3.00	(.92)
SuS	3.36	(.97)	3.11	(1.11)	3.11	(1.03)	3.35	(1.07)	2.21	(1.01)	2.62	(1.30)
EN	4.45	(.69)	4.14	(.86)	4.15	(.95)	4.57	(.58)	3.40	(1.18)	2.88	(.97)
CC	4.01	(1.06)	3.34	(1.20)	3.17	(1.14)	3.96	(1.04)	3.06	(1.34)	2.69	(.76)
C&SI	3.64	(1.24)	3.71	(1.12)	3.52	(1.28)	3.76	(1.16)	2.84	(1.24)	3.10	(1.18)
C&F	4.26	(.94)	4.28	(.94)	4.07	(1.01)	4.45	(.77)	2.87	(1.19)	3.06	(1.00)

	Self		Spouse		Others	
Scales	F		F		F	
CD	1.57		7.09**		<1.00	
HE	10.23***		6.53**		<1.00	
SoS	1.18		1.38		<1.00	
N&V	1.09		1.06		<1.00	
PhH	4.42*		2.05		1.86	
PeH	2.73		11.18***		<1.00	
SuS	1.60		1.35		1.94	
EN	6.21**		9.86***		4.70*	
CC	4.44*		6.54**		<1.00	
C&SI	<1.00		1.01		<1.00	
C&F	<1.00		5.21*		<1.00	

N = 98 Females, 68 Males.

Note. CD, Cognitive Development; HE, Handling of Emotions; SoS, Social Skills; N&V, Norms and Values; PhH, Physical Health; PeH, Personal Hygiene; SuS, Survival Skills; EN, Meeting Child's Emotional Needs; CC, Child Care; C&SI, Interface Role Between Child and Social Institutions; and C&F, Interface Role Between Child and Family.

[a]Items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (low satisfaction) to 5 (high satisfaction). Total scale scores were divided by the number of items on each scale.

*p < .05
**p < .01
***p < .001

Table 2

Dual-worker Families: Comparison of Mean Preferred Responsibility Reponses of Female and Male Parents on the 11 Parenting Scales

	Self					Spouse					Others				
	Females		Males			Females		Males			Females		Males		
Scales	M[a]	(SD)	M[a]	(SD)	F	M[a]	(SD)	M[a]	(SD)	F	M[a]	(SD)	M[a]	(SD)	F
CD	32.76	(12.83)	32.99	(11.78)	<1.00	25.48	(10.61)	31.49	(10.45)	11.92***	42.05	(18.56)	35.90	(20.62)	3.65
HE	45.49	(12.18)	40.58	(11.26)	6.27**	37.12	(11.31)	43.72	(9.79)	13.90***	17.45	(15.47)	16.41	(13.84)	<1.00
SoS	41.81	(11.83)	40.47	(10.07)	<1.00	35.16	(11.10)	39.10	(7.62)	5.83*	22.98	(16.27)	20.41	(14.65)	<1.00
N&V	44.01	(9.46)	42.38	(8.51)	1.17	38.46	(11.40)	43.14	(7.08)	8.23***	17.70	(14.82)	14.26	(11.51)	2.33
PhH	31.13	(13.45)	38.92	(15.77)	10.25***	33.55	(14.93)	31.10	(12.50)	1.07	35.38	(22.18)	31.09	(22.60)	1.30
PeH	49.29	(13.79)	39.32	(13.04)	20.64***	34.76	(12.67)	46.29	(10.09)	36.76***	15.80	(14.91)	14.37	(15.93)	<1.00
SuS	43.12	(13.11)	39.55	(12.78)	2.49	38.21	(13.00)	40.05	(9.24)	<1.00	19.34	(17.62)	20.90	(16.90)	<1.00
EN	46.64	(9.63)	42.05	(8.57)	9.28***	39.21	(10.50)	46.19	(8.84)	18.79***	14.22	(12.35)	11.84	(12.42)	1.38
CC	46.92	(18.45)	31.96	(14.40)	14.23***	32.48	(10.94)	53.18	(19.17)	33.22***	21.67	(20.16)	15.40	(22.80)	1.55
C&SI	39.21	(11.47)	40.10	(14.18)	<1.00	37.60	(13.22)	41.13	(11.70)	2.50	22.93	(19.77)	20.26	(19.87)	1.00
C&I	45.48	(11.71)	43.00	(11.02)	1.70	39.92	(12.68)	46.50	(9.45)	11.81***	13.59	(13.40)	10.48	(11.59)	2.16

N = 98 Females, 68 Males.

Note. CD, Cognitive Development; HE, Handling of Emotions; SoS, Social Skills; N&V, Norms and Values; PhH, Physical Health; PeH, Personal Hygiene; SuS, Survival Skills; EN, Meeting Child's Emotional Needs; CC, Child Care; C&SI, Interface Role Between Child and Social Institutions; and C&F Interface Role Between Child and Family.

[a]For each item, respondents indicated the percentage of responsibility they preferred be taken by Self, Spouse, and Others. Total scale scores were divided by the number of items on each scale.

*p < .05
**p < .01
***p < .001